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the fault. It exists however and examples of its consequences might be pointed out. It would be a difficult task to translate in a quite satisfactory manner such a book, full of finely penned observations, of delicate, of eloquent pages; but among works of its kind few do better deserve a translator.

CHARLES BORGEAUD.

*The Cambridge Modern History.* Planned by the late LORD ACTON, LL.D. Edited by A. W. WARD, Litt.D., G. W. PROTHERO, Litt.D., and STANLEY LEATHES, M.A. Vol. IX. *Napoleon.* (Cambridge: University Press; New York: The Macmillan Company. 1906. Pp. xxviii, 946.)

THIS volume deals with the history of the world for a few short years; years, however, in which the furnace was heated seven-fold, and when much that had long passed for sterling metal was proven to be base, flowing off into oblivion with the slag. Bound up together in this work are twenty-four monographs by sixteen different authors: British, French, German, Swiss, and Russian. Within the covers are about four hundred thousand words of text and fifty thousand, more or less, of bibliography, chronology, and index. The contents deal with the histories of all historic lands in this fiery epoch, except with that of America. In some sense the career of Napoleon Bonaparte affords the observation tower from which events are viewed, but every one of the contemporary sovereignties has its turn in that capacity, so that the eye of the mind is occupied now with one perspective, now with another, and frequently is confused by the overlapping of two or more historic systems, conceptions, and methods. Throughout there is an apodictic air of ultimacy, a magisterial appearance of soundness, completeness and finality.

The reviewer has not read this ponderous work in its entirety: few persons are likely to do so, except those whose time and diligence are not limited nor otherwise engaged. Yet he has noted, almost at every venture with the book, certain facts which must not be overlooked and which are proven, on further examination, to be characteristic of the enterprise as a whole. Granting that the plan here executed remains substantially that marked out by Lord Acton before his death, a claim frequently reiterated, we must nevertheless remark that the excellent editors who carry his charge, as ably as they may, have nevertheless been unable to string the bow of Ulysses. There are both assumptions and contradictions which would not have escaped his eye; from the array of facts as given in the book, conclusions are drawn which are illogical and must for consistency's sake be regarded as based on a quite different statement of the case; the authorities given in the bibliography have either been overlooked or rejected; and, finally, there is that which, according to Lord Acton's letters, his soul loathed—an air

of impartiality which when carefully scrutinized turns out to be a mere absence of enthusiasm.

Let us first take an example or two of gratuitous assumption. On page 52 is the account of Nelson's behavior at Copenhagen; given here as a conclusion from contemporary knowledge, yet standing exactly as it might have been written with the imperfect knowledge and national, patriotic enthusiasm of an earlier generation. The facts as stated on that page are dubiously questioned by every recent critic, and for sound reasons: the evidence is easily accessible in the second volume of Mahan's *Life of Nelson*. Again, on p. 235, it is calmly stated that after the treaty of Tilsit information regarding the secret articles "reached the ministry" and led to the second bombardment of Copenhagen: a declaration which, granting some credibility to hearsays and fictions, is even then misleading, and in the light of cold reason almost certainly untrue. The paragraph on pp. 297 and 298 gives a better and very different impression of the circumstances. Another assumption of similar character which caught the writer's eye is on p. 507, where it is stated that the Napoleonic wars depopulated France; this is a fiction based solely on *a priori* reasoning and long since exploded by careful investigations, easily accessible to any one. Should these be the only instances of so grave a fault, the reviewer would be amazed, for he did not set out to search for them, but fell upon them unawares.

In a similar way contradictions of a rather startling kind force themselves upon the attention. Regarding the events subsequent to the treaty of Amiens, the reader may, for instance, compare pp. 80, 103 and 244. On the first of these, Bonaparte foresaw and foretold the coming struggle; on the second is given the Tory account of the Wentworth scene, with the curious remark that Napoleon had no belief in the warlike intentions of England; on the third is, if not a flat contradiction, at least a very cautious hedging as to Napoleon's plans for war. Incidentally, in the last passage it is stated that in England trade was prosperous and credit good, while only two pages earlier the figures are given which show the ravages on British commerce begun in 1803, increased more than fifty per cent. in that very year 1804, and steadily growing until in 1810 and 1811 the country was on the verge of famine and ruin. Such confusing paradoxes are inevitable in two accounts by different authors from opposite points of view.

The treatment, or rather the varying treatments, of Napoleon's Boulogne camp is, however, on the whole the most bewildering and puzzling example in this volume of how "too many cooks spoil the broth". Some of the authors take for granted that Napoleon really intended the invasion of England; one gives minutely the successive stages in the evolution of his plan; others are uneasily conscious that the whole thing was a perpetual menace to wear out British patience and exhaust British resources; another judges that Napoleon as usual, so in this case, desired "faire toujours son thème en deux façons", and thinks the preparations

for continental war so incomplete as to indicate the greater seriousness of the invasion plan. The almost overwhelming counter-evidence is nowhere given. In 1802 Bonaparte declared his policy of keeping Great Britain "in constant dread"; he had already dropped the project of the Directory for invasion as a chimera; he declined propositions for the propulsion of his boats which would have made the plan feasible; all the best observers of the time, diplomats and memoir-writers, knew the purpose was not serious; his preparations for continental war may have been poor, but they were clearly explained by the emperor to his council of state and regarded by him as admirable, while his march across Europe was unsurpassed as a strategic move, being brilliantly successful against the Third Coalition, alike from the military, the diplomatic, and the political points of view; finally, what would have been the fate of any invading army, however large, thrown into the wasp's nest of a hostile population and cut off from its base, an event sure beyond peradventure in the relative conditions of the French and British navies. Surely Bonaparte had not merely strategic genius but ordinary common sense.

We had intended to discuss somewhat the idiosyncrasy which, in treating of military matters, emphasizes the checks in a great campaign triumphantly concluded, and says nothing of the unity in design which makes tactical defeats unimportant where a strategic combination must and does assure ultimate success. One example of this in the book under review is the weak and misleading treatment of the Marengo campaign by a Swiss professor; another, scarcely less reprehensible, is the account of the battles of the Marchfeld in 1809 by a retired German general. Had Bonaparte lost at Marengo, the campaign was nevertheless destined to success by reason of his larger combinations; Aspern was a partial defeat, but the strategic conception behind it and the means at Napoleon's command could only lead to one result; Wagram produced the peace of Schönbrunn. On the other hand, Waterloo likewise was the close of a brilliant campaign, but the Napoleonic strategy, entirely justified until after Ligny, seems, in the light of our latest knowledge as conveyed by Lettow-Vorbeck's study, to have been completely thwarted when the Prussians, instead of retreating to Namur as a matter of course, and as they probably would have done under Blücher's direction, drew off to Wavre, toward the French flank, under the direction of the staff, by a decision made at night when the general-in-chief was disabled; and so were ready for the timely junction with Wellington made next day. This march decided the fortune of war, not being disturbed by Grouchy's tardy movements; but the plan was not Blücher's, as is reiterated in this volume, the march was begun before the old general recovered, when he accepted the inevitable.

Most of the faulty points we have indicated are inherent in the co-operative writing of history. Even the best-considered and best-executed schemes, like those of the French publishers, which bear the

name of Lavissee, lack coherence and unity. It appears to the reviewer that the *Cambridge Modern History* falls far short of the moderate excellence attained even by them. This volume, moreover, bears the simple name *Napoleon* on the back to indicate its covering the epoch of that great man. It contains chapters on Great Britain and Ireland, 1792-1815, and on the British empire for the same years. But the act of Napoleon which has had a more profound significance in later history than any other is barely mentioned, the sale of Louisiana; and while it is true that the history of the United States for these forty-three years had no determinative influence on that of Europe at the time, yet its career as a neutral power was uncommonly interesting in Great Britain at the time and its history was far more pregnant for the later destiny of the world than that of most European powers, let alone Canada, India, or the West Indies. To Americans the omission must seem very strange indeed.

Considerable wonder must also be felt as to the public for which such a volume is made. The expert scholar will find little satisfaction in disconnected monographs, even by careful compilers; the intelligent layman must feel strangely confused by the contradictory views of the same events in the different divisions, where they so constantly overlap; the popular taste has not been consulted at all. Cyclopedias have their uses, and as a book of reference this one has a certain value, though it is neither a monument of British scholarship nor of Continental, there being neither continuity nor unity in the product of a well-meant effort to weld the two. The earlier years of the period are described, for different purposes, four different times; the second quarter, six; the third, eight; and the last, ten times; either wholly or partially. A single author might do this with clarity, sixteen cannot; and the limit of possible editorial revision and change for the sake of unity is quickly reached. The impersonal, mechanical quality must be avoided at all hazards in every manufactured article, much more in what purports to be history.

Of course, there is excellent work in this fascies of historical tracts. Viewed singly, most of them are good, especially those on the Codes, the Concordats, the Continental System, and the Peninsular War. The last chapter, that on St. Helena, is a dispassionate summary of excellent quality. Moreover, where so much has to be omitted, the selection of matter is generally judicious. For the adventurous reader the great channel of Napoleon's career is well charted and buoyed. Yet such will be few; there is little charm of style anywhere, no quality of mysterious evolution in the subject which compels attention, no magisterial character in the book to command the highest respect. As to the bibliography, no arrangement could have been invented more forbidding to the searcher after authors, titles, or subjects.